

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### VISION

Having established a City Council Goal in 2016 to adopt Vision Zero, public safety is a top priority for the City of Urbana, Illinois. As the first Gold Level Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) in Illinois as recognized by the League of American Bicyclists (LAB), Urbana strives for Platinum, and ultimately Diamond, recognition. Urbana can meet this vision by developing a connected multimodal infrastructure where casual or less confident bicyclists can use their bikes for everyday trips, and where bicycle commuters can travel safely and smoothly through the community. By encouraging and increasing the number of people walking, bicycling and using transit, the city can lower its carbon footprint while saving residents money and improving their health.

### PLAN UPDATE

The 2016 City of Urbana Bicycle Master Plan (UBMP) is an update of the 2008 plan by the same name. This plan aims to enhance safety and improve infrastructure for current bicyclists, while seeking to increase the number of bicyclists by targeting casual or less confident riders. Implementing the recommendations of the plan will enhance Urbana's Gold Bicycle Friendly Community status while putting it on a path to Platinum (or even Diamond) designation.

Since the 2008 plan was adopted, Urbana has expanded its bikeways by nearly 80%, with a total of 43 miles. Most major destinations are now within one block of a bikeway, though discontinuities still exist and need to be addressed. Bike counts are highest near the University of Illinois District and in South Urbana. Crashes between people on bikes and in cars are most prevalent across arterial streets including University, Cunningham, and Lincoln Avenues. Overall comfort levels for on-road bicycling have improved, as measured by Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) (see Chapter 10). Compared to 2008, an additional 69 road segments are now "comfortable" to ride on.

### PUBLIC INPUT

Four joint public meetings were held to gather public input for the UBMP and the Urbana Park District Trails Master Plan. At these meetings, attendees identified the places they ride to and from and identified preferred locations for future bikeways. In addition to the public workshops, input was gathered through the 2013-14 Urbana Pedestrian and Bicycle Survey. According to the survey results, nine percent of Urbana residents bike to work or school three to four days a week, and 11 percent bike to other destinations three to four days a week. Successful implementation of this plan could increase these numbers significantly.

### GOALS

The UBMP has six main themes, each with an associated goal. The themes are: **Safety, Connectivity, Convenience, Education, Equity, and Implementation.** For **Safety**, the goal is to **provide a bicycle network that is safe and attractive for all users.** For **Connectivity**, the goal is to **create and maintain a bicycle network that is continuous, connected, and easily accessible for all users.** For **Convenience**, the goal is to **provide supporting facilities to make bicycle transportation more convenient.** For **Education**, the goal is to **educate residents about active modes of transportation and bicycle facilities.** For **Equity**, the goal is to **provide equal access of bicycle facilities and information to all residents.** And, for **Implementation**, the goal is to **secure funding and implement bicycle improvements.**

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Bikeway recommendations (see Figure 1) were developed based on existing conditions and public input. The recommendations can be summarized by the following actions:

1. Improve safety and continuity of existing bikeways and routes.
2. Install **bikeway and trail wayfinding signs** to supplement existing and proposed bike route and trail signs in Urbana.
3. Enhance **Safe Routes to Schools** by installing bike routes and shared-use paths near the following schools: Dr. Williams Elementary, Leal Elementary, Thomas Paine Elementary, Yankee Ridge Elementary, Urbana Middle School, and Urbana High School.
4. Establish the **Urbana Green Loop** trail, to connect all of Urbana's parks, in concert with the Urbana Park District Trails Master Plan (see Figure 2).
5. Implement the **MCORE (Multimodal Corridor Enhancement) Project** along Green Street, to connect the University of Illinois to Downtown Urbana.
6. Install bikeways to improve **bike access in low-income neighborhoods**, especially in areas where bicycles may be a primary form of transportation for people.
7. Install bikeways to improve **bike access to employers**, especially major employers.
8. Encourage businesses to become **Bicycle Friendly Businesses and improve bicycle parking.**
9. Establish safe **bike access across I-74 and within the neighborhoods and employment centers north of I-74.**

10. Install trails and bikeways in all **future land developments** and when arterial roads are reconstructed, meeting Urbana’s Complete Streets policy.
11. Work with partner agencies to establish **loop trails between parks** in concert with the Urbana Park District Trails Master Plan.
12. Install **Rail-Trails** when railroads abandon rail corridors or allow trails next to existing railroad tracks.

The 2016 UBMP greatly expands on the 2008 plan with non-infrastructure recommendations for education, encouragement, enforcement, equity, and evaluation. The new recommendations include providing bicycle education for children and adults, holding events that celebrate new and existing cyclists, encouraging enforcement against behaviors that make bicycling unsafe, and continuing to evaluate Urbana’s bikeway network and emerging bikeway treatments.

Emerging bikeway treatments include bike boulevards, neighborhood greenways, two-stage left turn queue boxes, colored bikeways, and protected intersections. These treatments are discussed in the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide but need further study beyond this plan regarding installation locations, cost, and design. When considering future bikeway improvements, these treatments should be considered.

It is recommended that Section VIII-7: Bicycle Parking of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance be updated to improve and increase bicycle parking in Urbana. Various options should be included for short-term (two hours or less) and long-term (more than two hours) bicycle parking. Incentive programs to replace existing substandard bicycle parking should be examined.

## IMPLEMENTATION

The City of Urbana and other agencies need to secure funding to implement many of the recommendations of this plan. While this plan is visionary, projects proposed in the next 5 years that are the sole responsibility of the City of Urbana fall within the existing budget for UBMP implementation. This plan’s author, the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC), had the unique opportunity to develop a Trail Master Plan for the Urbana Park District in concert with the UBMP. Certain recommendations, including the Urbana Green Loop, will come to fruition only by working with the Urbana Park District and other community partners.

When compared to peer communities and model Bicycle Friendly Communities, a key ingredient that Urbana lacks is a dedicated bicycle coordinator. A major recommendation of this plan is for the City of Urbana to pool its resources with

other local agencies to create a full-time bicycle/pedestrian coordinator position at a regional agency to help ensure this plan’s implementation.

## MAPS

**Figure 1:** 2016 Greater Urbana Proposed Bikeway Network Map

**Figure 2:** Proposed Urbana Green Loop Map

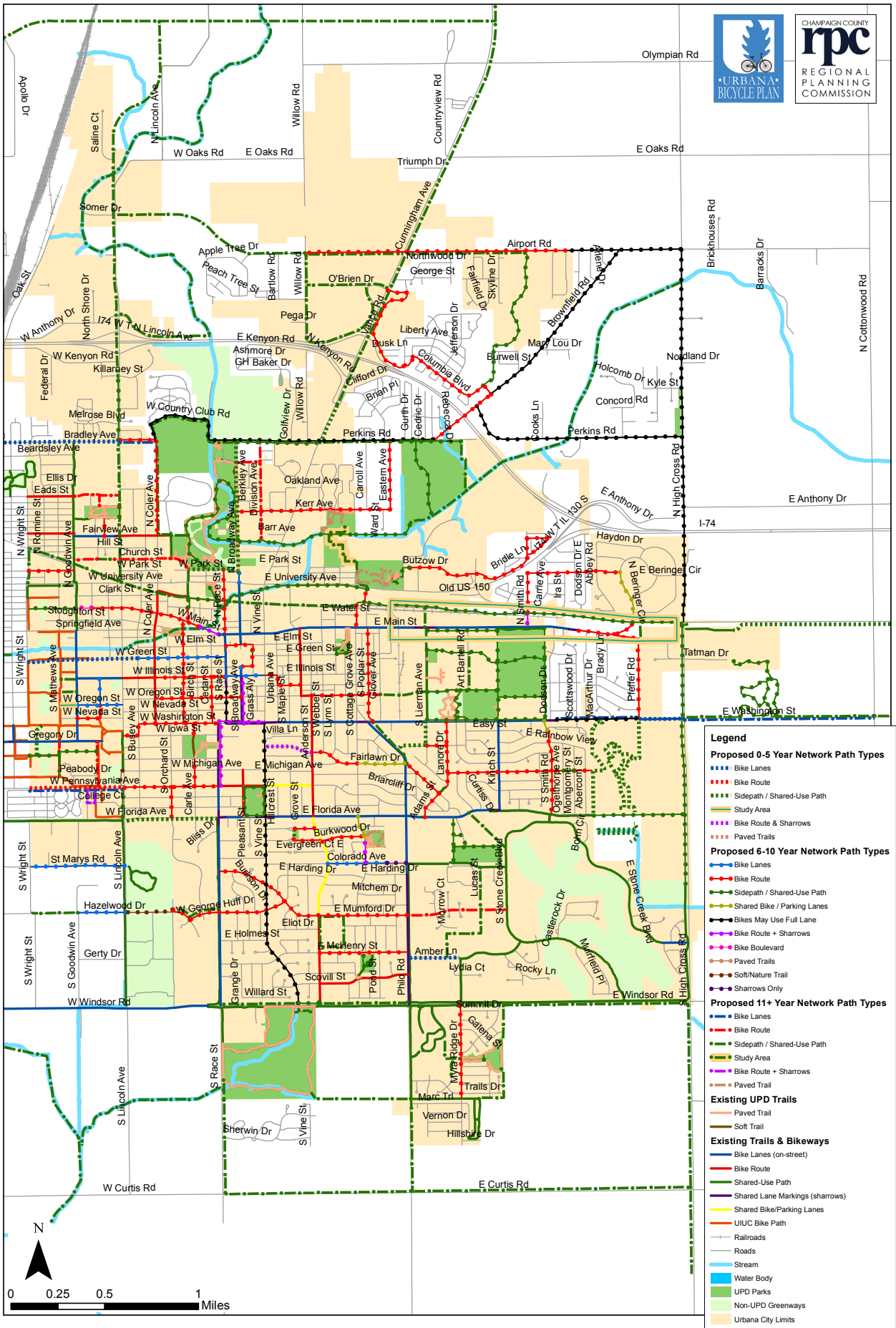


Figure 1 2016 Greater Urbana Proposed Bikeway Network Map

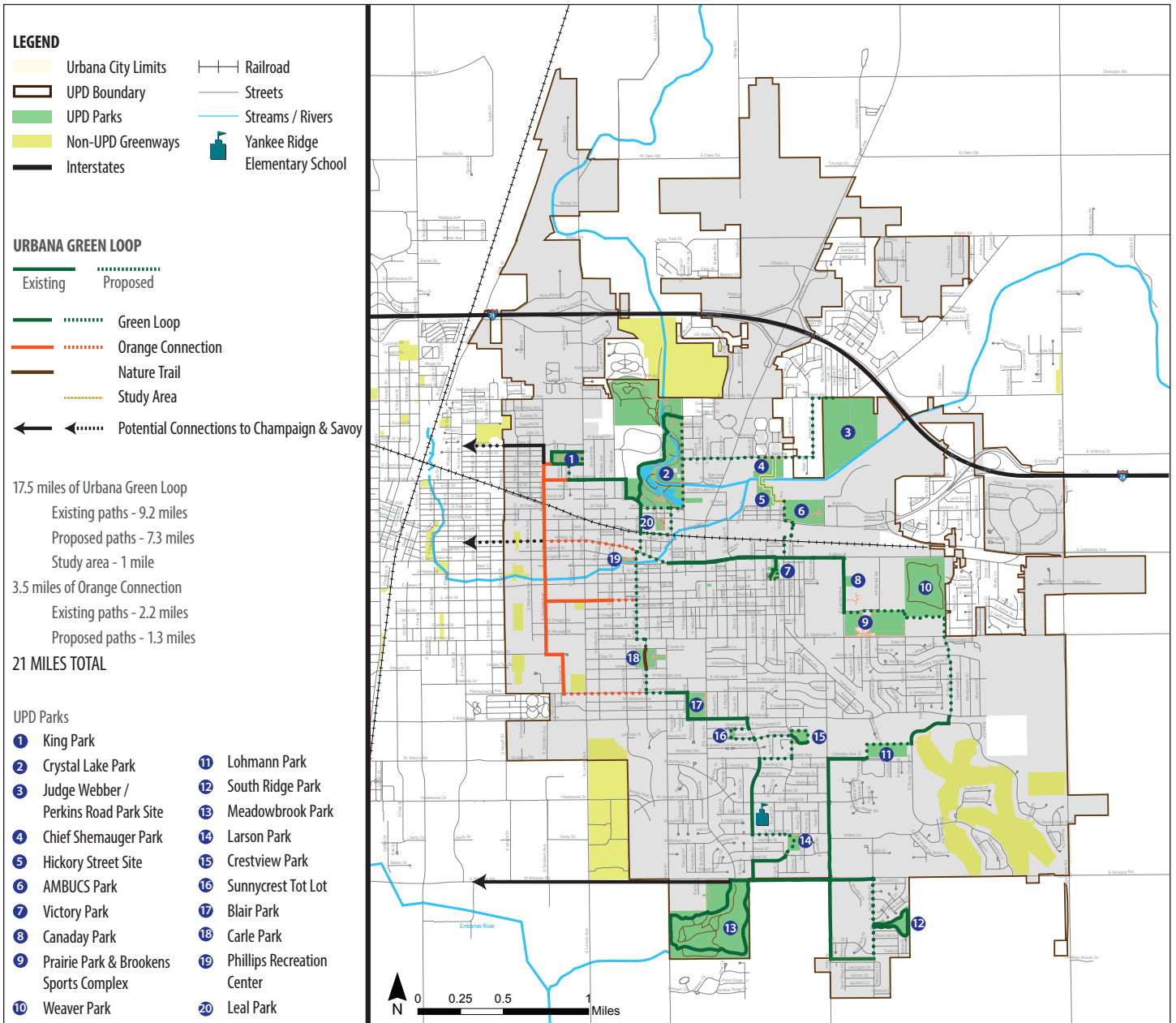


Figure 2 Proposed Urbana Green Loop Map

*This page intentionally left blank.*